

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. When strikethrough cannot easily be perceived, or when five or fewer characters are deleted, ~~[[double brackets]]~~ are used to show the deletion. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered). Please AMEND claims 1, 5, and 9, and ADD new claim 13 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage controlling a computer to search information and comprising a process of:

storing, in a knowledge database, a plurality of causes for a problem to be diagnosed, a plurality of questions having ~~[[cause-and-effect]]~~ relations with the plurality of causes, ~~[[and]]~~ correlation levels showing a degree of correlation between the causes and each of the plurality of questions, and corresponding predetermined answer choices to the plurality of questions;

extracting certain questions from the plurality of questions using an algorithm that compares the correlation levels between the causes and the plurality of questions to a predetermined threshold value to determine the relevancy of the plurality of questions to the problem to be diagnosed~~based on the correlation levels~~;

displaying the certain questions to a user;

for each of the certain questions displayed to the user, receiving an answer selected by the user from the predetermined answer choices~~answers from the user corresponding respectively to the certain questions; and~~

extracting causes with high correlation levels from the plurality of causes based on the user selected answers to the certain questions displayed to the user and the correlation levels; and

displaying the extracted causes to~~[[from]]~~ the user.

2. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage according to claim 1, further comprising assigning a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels.

3. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage according to claim 2, further comprising displaying, as a search result, the extracted causes in colors, each color corresponding to one of the priorities.

4. (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage according to claim 1, wherein said extracting causes comprises assigning a weight to each of the answers.

5. (Currently Amended) A method of searching information using an information search apparatus connected to a client via a network, the client being connected to an input device and a display, the method comprising:

storing, in a knowledge database of the information search apparatus, a plurality of causes for a problem to be diagnosed, a plurality of questions having [[cause-and-effect]] relations with the plurality of causes, [[and]] correlation levels showing a degree of correlation between the causes and each of the plurality of questions, and corresponding predetermined answer choices to the plurality of questions;

extracting certain questions from the plurality of questions using an algorithm that compares the correlation levels between the causes and the plurality of questions to a predetermined threshold value to determine the relevancy of the plurality of questions to the problem to be diagnosed~~based on the correlation levels~~;

displaying, on the display, the certain questions to be answered by a user;

for each of the certain questions displayed to the user, receiving an answer selected by the user from the predetermined answer choices~~answers from the user~~, via the network, ~~corresponding respectively to the certain questions~~, the answers being input by the user using the input device; [[and]]

extracting causes with high correlation levels from the plurality of causes based on the user selected answers to the certain questions displayed to the user and the correlation levels; and

displaying the extracted causes to[[from]] the user.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of searching information according to claim 5, further comprising assigning a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of searching information according to claim 6, further comprising displaying, on the display as a search result, the extracted causes in colors, each color corresponding to one of the priorities.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of searching information according to claim 5, wherein said extracting causes comprises assigning a weight to each of the answers.

9. (Currently Amended) A system for searching information having an information search apparatus connected to a client via a client network, the client being connected to an input device and a display, the information search apparatus comprising:

a knowledge database storing a plurality of causes for a problem to be diagnosed, a plurality of questions having [[cause-and-effect]] relations with the plurality of causes, [[and]] correlation levels showing a degree of ~~correlations~~correlation between the causes and each of the plurality of questions, and predetermined answer choices to the plurality of~~corresponding~~ questions;

a first control unit extracting certain questions from the plurality of questions using an algorithm that compares the correlation levels between the causes and the plurality of questions to a predetermined threshold value to determine the relevancy of the plurality of questions to the problem to be diagnosed~~based on the correlation levels~~, displaying the certain questions to be answered by a user on the display, and, for each of the certain questions displayed to the user, receiving an answer selected by the user from the predetermined answer choices~~answers from the user~~ via the network, the answers ~~corresponding respectively to the certain questions and~~ being input by the user using the input device; and

a second control unit extracting causes with high correlation levels from the plurality of causes based on the user selected answers to the certain questions displayed to~~[[from]]~~ the user and the correlation levels; and

displaying the extracted causes to the user.

10. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 9, wherein the second control unit assigns a priority to each of the extracted causes based on the correlation levels.

11. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 10, wherein the second control unit displays, on the display as a search result, the extracted causes in colors, each color corresponding to one of the priorities.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of searching information according to claim 9, wherein the second control unit assigns a weight to each of the answers.

13. (New) A computer-readable storage controlling a computer to search information and comprising a process of:

storing, in a knowledge database, a plurality of causes for a problem, a plurality of questions having relations with the plurality of causes, correlation levels showing a degree of correlation between the causes and each of the plurality of questions; and predetermined answer choices to the plurality of questions;

extracting a first set of certain questions having a remote correlation with the problem from the plurality of questions using a first question extracting algorithm that compares the correlation levels between the plurality of causes and the plurality of questions to a predetermined threshold value to determine the relevancy of the plurality of questions to the problem to be diagnosed;

displaying the first set of certain questions to the user;

for each of the first set of certain questions displayed to the user, receiving an answer selected by the user from the predetermined answer choices;

extracting a second set of certain questions from the remaining questions having a correlation with the problem from the plurality of questions using a second question extracting algorithm using correlation levels and the answers received from the user;

displaying the second set of certain questions to the user;

for each of the second set of certain questions displayed to the user, receiving an answer selected by the user from the predetermined answer choices;

weighting the causes using the answers provided by the user and the correlation levels;

and

displaying the weighted causes to the user to indicate relevance to the problem.